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General Assembly

FIFTY-SECOND SESSION

Official Records

GENERAL COMMITTEE
1st meeting
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Wednesday, 17 September 1997
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. UDOVENKO
(President of the General Assembly)

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ORGANIZATION OF THE FIFTY-SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS: MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

ORGANIZATION OF THE FIFTY-SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ALLOCATION OF ITEMS: MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/BUR/52/1)

Section I: Introduction

1. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the provisions reproduced in annexes V, VI, VII and VIII of its rules of procedure. It also took note of paragraph 4 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Section II. Organization of the session

Paragraph 5 (General Committee)

2. The Committee took note of the decisions referred to in paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraphs 6 to 9 (Rationalization of work)

3. The Committee took note of paragraphs 6, 7 and 9, and decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraph 10 (Closing date of the session)

4. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the fifty-second session should recess not later than Tuesday, 16 December 1997, and to draw the attention of the Assembly to the fact that the closing date of the fifty-second session would be subject to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 51/241 of 31 July 1997. The Committee also decided to recommend to the Assembly that the Main Committees should start their work as soon as possible and make every effort to complete their work by Friday, 28 November 1997.

Paragraphs 11 to 13 (Schedule of meetings)

5. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that morning meetings should start at 10 a.m. promptly for all plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees. The Committee also decided to recommend to the Assembly that, as a cost-saving measure, plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees, including informal consultations, should be adjourned by 6 p.m., and that no meeting should be held on weekends. It also decided to recommend that the cost-saving measure should also apply, for the remainder of 1997, to meetings on the calendar of conferences and meetings.

6. The Committee further decided to recommend that, in order to avoid the late start of meetings, the General Assembly should waive the quorum requirements for plenary meetings and meetings of the Main Committees.

7. The CHAIRMAN urged all delegations to cooperate with the suggestion made at a previous session for each delegation to designate one of its members to be present at the scheduled time.

Paragraphs 14 to 16 (General debate)

8. The Committee endorsed the suggestions contained in paragraphs 14 and 15 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

9. The CHAIRMAN urged representatives, in view of the large number of speakers already inscribed on the list of speakers for the general debate, to take the floor in the order in which they were listed. Those unable to speak at the scheduled time would be put at the end of the list for the meeting.

10. The Committee decided to recommend to the Assembly that the provisions outlined in paragraph 16 of the Secretary-General's memorandum should also apply during the fifty-second session.

Paragraphs 17 to 19 (Explanations of vote, right of reply, points of order and length of statements)

11. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 of its decision 34/401 and to rules 72 and 114 of the rules of procedure and paragraph 22 of annex VI thereto for appropriate action in plenary meeting and by the Main Committees. It further decided to recommend to the Assembly that points of order should be limited to 5 minutes.

Paragraph 20 (Records of meetings)

12. The Committee decided to take note of paragraph 20 of the Secretary-General's memorandum and, in that connection, decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the practice of not reproducing in extenso statements made in a Main Committee should be maintained for the fifty-second session.

Paragraph 21 (Seating arrangements)

13. The Committee took note of paragraph 21 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraph 22 (Concluding statements)

14. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the need for full implementation of paragraph 17 of General Assembly decision 34/401.

Paragraphs 23 to 27 (Resolutions)

15. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 32 of its decision 34/401, to recommendation 3 (f) of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations, to paragraph 5 of its resolution 48/264, to paragraph 24 of annex I of resolution 50/227, and to paragraphs 1 and 10 of the annex to its resolution 45/45.

Paragraphs 28 to 30 (Documentation)

16. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to paragraph 28 of its decision 34/401, to paragraph 6 of its resolution 48/264, and to paragraph 4 of its resolution 50/206 C. The Committee also decided to take note of paragraph 30 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraphs 31 to 34 (Questions related to the programme budget)

17. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the provisions contained in paragraphs 31 and 32 and the observations contained in paragraphs 33 and 34 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraphs 35 and 36 (Observances and commemorative meetings)

18. The Committee endorsed the suggestions contained in paragraphs 35 and 36 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraphs 37 and 38 (Special conferences)

19. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to the recommendations referred to in paragraphs 37 and 38 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

Paragraph 39 (Meetings of subsidiary organs)

20. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to a letter dated 6 September 1997 from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences to the President of the General Assembly (A/52/340) informing him that the Committee had recommended, on the strict understanding that meetings would have to be accommodated within available facilities and services, that a number of subsidiary organs should be authorized to meet during the main part of the fifty-second session. Authorization was sought for the Committee for Programme and Coordination, the Committee on Conferences, the Committee on Relations with the Host Country, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, and the Working Group on the Financing of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

21. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should authorize the subsidiary organs of the Assembly referred to in paragraph 39 of the Secretary-General's memorandum to meet during the main part of the fifty-second session.

Section III. Observations on the organization of future sessions of the General Assembly

Paragraphs 40 to 42

22. The Committee decided to draw the General Assembly's attention to its resolution 51/241 of 31 July 1997, in particular section VI of the annex to that resolution.

23. Mr. CAMPBELL (Ireland) suggested, in that context, that explicit mention of the timing of the Assembly's plenary meetings and general debate should be included in the Committee's recommendation to the Assembly.

Section IV. Adoption of the agenda

24. The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with rule 40 of the rules of procedure, the Committee would not consider the substance of any item except in so far as it bore on the question of whether or not to recommend the inclusion of that item in the agenda.

25. He drew attention to the suggestions in paragraph 43 of the Secretary-General's memorandum, in particular to paragraphs 4 and 5 (a) and (c) of annex I to General Assembly resolution 48/264, whose provisions had been reaffirmed by the General Assembly in paragraph 24 of the annex to its resolution 51/241.

26. The Committee decided to take note of paragraph 43 of the Secretary-General's memorandum.

27. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to paragraph 44 of the Secretary-General's memorandum regarding item 96 of the draft agenda, and proposed that the Committee should consider the request contained in the communication from Croatia (A/52/231) when it took up the question of the inclusion of that item.

Inclusion of items

Items 1 to 6

28. The CHAIRMAN said that items 1 to 6 had already been dealt with; he would therefore take it that there were no comments on their inclusion in the agenda.

Items 7 to 93

29. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 7 to 93 in the agenda.

Item 94

30. Mr. KPOTSRA (Togo) said that, after consultations with the Governments of Madagascar and France, his delegation was requesting that consideration of the item concerning the question of the Malagasy islands of Glorieuses, Juan de Nova, Europa and Bassas da India should be deferred to the fifty-third session

of the General Assembly, without prejudice to the positions those Governments might take on the matter at that time.

31. Mr. ZACHARAKIS (Greece) supported the proposal of the representative of Togo.

32. The Committee decided to recommend that consideration of item 94 should be deferred to the fifty-third session of the General Assembly and that it should be included in the provisional agenda of that session.

Item 95

33. Mr. MUBARAK (Egypt) said that the Secretary-General, in his progress report on the situation in East Timor (A/52/349) had informed the General Assembly that he would seek to give new impetus to the tripartite talks with Portugal and Indonesia. The visit of his Personal Representative to the area had revitalized efforts to find a solution and laid the groundwork for the ninth round of the tripartite talks. Because of the need to promote an atmosphere conducive to progress in those talks, his delegation was proposing that consideration of that item should be deferred until the fifty-third session of the General Assembly.

34. Mr. ZACHARAKIS (Greece) supported the proposal of the representative of Egypt.

35. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that consideration of item 95 should be deferred until the fifty-third session and that it should be included in the provisional agenda of that session.

Item 96

36. The CHAIRMAN said that the representative of Croatia had asked to participate in the discussion of the item. Rule 43 of the rules of procedure did not apply. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to accede to that request.

37. It was so decided.

38. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia) took a place at the Committee table.

39. Mr. DROBNJAK (Croatia) drew attention to document A/52/231, which set out the position of his delegation on the situation in the occupied territories of Croatia. That item had first been included in the agenda of the forty-ninth session at the request of his delegation. At that session, resolution 49/43 had been adopted, expressing firm support for Croatia's territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and calling for the reintegration of the occupied territories into Croatia.

40. Since that time, much progress had been achieved and almost all the provisions of that resolution had been complied with. In fact, no discussion of the item had taken place at either the fiftieth or fifty-first sessions. Therefore, in the interests of streamlining the agenda and rationalizing the

work of the General Assembly, his delegation requested that the item should be removed from the agenda because it was no longer relevant to the situation in Croatia.

41. Mr. GORELIK (Russian Federation) said that, in the view of his delegation, the request to remove item 96 from the agenda was premature. As long as the occupied territories of Croatia remained under United Nations administration, it was clear that the situation had not been fully resolved. In his report to the Security Council on the situation, the Secretary-General had stated that the reintegration of those territories had only begun. Therefore, the item should remain on the agenda for the fifty-second session.

42. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 96 in the agenda.

43. Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia) withdrew.

Item 97

44. Mr. de ROJAS (Venezuela) drew attention to item 97 (a) and recalled that, in annex II of General Assembly resolution 50/227 setting out the topics to be included on the agenda of the Second Committee, that sub-item included a footnote that was considered an integral part of the resolution, and therefore must be included in the sub-item as it appeared in the agenda.

45. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include item 97 in the agenda.

Items 98 to 156

46. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly should include items 98 to 156 in the agenda.

Item 157

47. Mr. ENKHSAIKHAN (Mongolia) drew attention to document A/52/141, which contained the request of his Government to include an item entitled "Draft guiding principles for international negotiations" in the agenda. His delegation proposed that the item should be included as a sub-item under item 148.

48. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that item 157 should be included in the agenda as a sub-item of item 148.

Item 158

49. The Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that item 158 should be included in the agenda.

Item 159

50. The CHAIRMAN said that the representative of the Solomon Islands had asked to participate in the discussion of the item in accordance with rule 43 of the rules of procedure.

51. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Horoi (Solomon Islands) took a place at the Committee table.

52. Mr. HOROI (Solomon Islands) said that, embracing the principles of the Charter, the Solomon Islands had on several occasions called upon the Republic of China on Taiwan and the People's Republic of China to take the necessary steps toward opening negotiations to achieve reunification. Both parties had stated that peaceful reunification was their goal and had offered strikingly similar sets of proposals, yet there had been no decisive movement towards negotiations. Delay made it harder to initiate such negotiations, increased tension across the Taiwan Strait and threatened international peace and security. Such negotiations would be greatly assisted by the participation of the Republic of China in the United Nations.

53. With that in mind, his delegation had introduced a request for inclusion of item 159 in the agenda on behalf of Burkina Faso, Dominica, the Gambia, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Nicaragua, Senegal, Swaziland, Chad, El Salvador, Honduras, Liberia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Those fourteen Member States represented the growing movement in the General Assembly favouring fair treatment of the Republic of China, a democracy of 21.5 million people whose right to participate in the United Nations continued to be unjustly denied.

54. The commitment of the Republic of China to reunification as reflected in document A/52/143 was critical to his delegation's support of the proposed agenda item. The sponsors were not attempting to split a sovereign State by creating "two Chinas", "one China, one Taiwan" or "one country, two Governments", as the representative of the People's Republic of China had claimed. They sought the peaceful reunification of China and self-determination of its people, including those on Taiwan. They were working for an effective and universal United Nations and were acting to prevent a slide into armed conflict.

55. The extraordinary language of resolution 2758 (XXVI) reflected the ideological excesses of the cold war, and was in violation of earlier General Assembly resolutions concerning self-determination and the future of China. There was ample precedent for the General Assembly revoking decisions, determinations or resolutions. If a past General Assembly had done an injustice and had violated the purposes of the Charter and the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it must set the world an example by reviewing its action, even 26 years later, and putting the matter right.

56. Arguments that resolution 2758 (XXVI) had settled the question of Taiwan for all time could not stand in the face of the changes in the international situation since 1971. Many of the political systems whose representatives had supported the expulsion of the representatives of the Republic of China were no longer in existence, while the latter was a thriving democracy and economy whose

investments were helping many countries, especially the People's Republic of China. Because of that resolution, however, the United Nations had rejected its offers of development aid and assistance, at a time when every possible source of funding was needed. The participation of the Republic of China in the work of the United Nations would increase the opportunities for fruitful interaction with representatives of the People's Republic of China, providing an opening towards reunification negotiations.

57. The time for suspicion and threats had ended. In its response to the request for inclusion of the item, however, the People's Republic of China had warned that countries supporting the request would pay a price for it. He wondered what kind of price was meant - political, economic or worse. Both the President and the Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China had made public statements in which they had made it clear that their Government had not forsworn the use of force in the reunification of the motherland. The Solomon Islands, the only sponsor of the request in the western Pacific, took such threats by a permanent member of the Security Council very seriously. Threats against Member States were a violation of the letter and the spirit of the Charter and numerous General Assembly resolutions, and had no place in the Organization. Yet the People's Republic of China had used its Security Council veto against small Member States maintaining friendly relations with Taiwan, and had worked to undermine the recent Universal Congress on the Panama Canal, despite its importance to many countries, once the involvement of the Republic of China had become known.

58. The General Committee could counter such tactics by granting the request to include the item in the agenda of the fifty-second session.

59. Mr. QIN Huasun (China) said that having been defeated for four consecutive years, a very small number of countries, in disregard of the norms of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), had once again put forward a proposal on the so-called Taiwan's "return to the United Nations" in which they openly requested a review of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI). The proposal distorted facts in a brazen attempt to make use of the United Nations to carry out activities aimed at splitting a sovereign State and creating "two Chinas", "one China, one Taiwan" or "one country, two Governments". That not only seriously encroached upon China's sovereignty and grossly interfered in its internal affairs, but also wilfully trampled upon the purposes and principles of the Charter and General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI). His delegation firmly opposed the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly and hoped that members of the Committee would uphold justice and support China's position.

60. Taiwan had been an inalienable part of China's territory since ancient times. To date, 159 countries had established diplomatic relations with China. They all recognized that there was but one China in the world, that the Government of the People's Republic of China was the sole legal Government representing China in its entirety, and that Taiwan was part of China. Though the two sides of the Taiwan Strait had been in a temporary state of separation since October 1949, that status of Taiwan as part of China had never changed, and the Government of the People's Republic of China had never given up its

jurisdiction over Taiwan. No change in Taiwan's social, economic and political situation could alter the fact that Taiwan was an inalienable part of the Chinese territory, and a province of China, and that the Taiwanese authorities were a local authority of China. Therefore, Taiwan had no qualifications whatsoever to join the United Nations or any organizations of the United Nations system whose members were sovereign States.

61. In 1971 the General Assembly had adopted resolution 2758 (XXVI) by an overwhelming majority. The resolution made it clear that the restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations and the expulsion of the Taiwan authorities from the United Nations were two indivisible aspects of the same question, and reaffirmed the "one China" principle, thus settling once and for all and in a just manner the question of China's representation at the United Nations.

62. Since 1993, a very small number of Member States, at the behest of the Taiwan authorities, had gone so far as to challenge General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) in an attempt to mislead the General Assembly into considering the question of the so-called Taiwan's "representation" and had even proposed a review of the resolution. The thrust of the proposal was to negate the "one China" principle and make a mockery of the United Nations.

63. The question of Taiwan was entirely a matter of China's internal affairs which could be settled only by the Chinese people themselves. Over a decade earlier, Mr. Deng Xiaoping had proposed the policy of peaceful reunification and "one country, two systems" for the settlement of the Taiwan question. President Jiang Zemin had put forward an eight-point proposal for developing relations across the Strait and advancing the process of peaceful reunification of the motherland. Five days previously, Jiang Zemin had stated that the concept of "one country, two systems" was the basic policy for the advancement of national reunification and that the smooth return of Hong Kong and the maintenance of its long-term prosperity and stability would create favourable conditions for the settlement of the Taiwan question. He had once again appealed to the two sides to hold discussions on formally ending the state of hostility under the "one China" principle and jointly undertake to safeguard China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and plan for the future development of relations across the Strait. Those proposals had not only taken into consideration the long-term interest of the entire Chinese people but also safeguarded the vital interests of the Taiwan compatriots, thus winning strong support from the entire Chinese people including the Taiwan compatriots. However, the Taiwan authorities had intensified their separatist activities aimed at creating "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan". China hoped that the Taiwan authorities would return to the "one China" position and stop all activities aimed at splitting up the motherland.

64. Mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs constituted the basis for the development of relations and cooperation between States. China attached importance to developing friendly relations with all countries, including those which did not yet have diplomatic relations with China, on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence. The separatist forces in Taiwan had exploited a few countries' lack of understanding of the true situation or economic difficulties

to engage in dollar diplomacy in an attempt to split the motherland, even at the expense of the fundamental interests of those countries. China hoped that the countries hoodwinked by Taiwan would come back to the right cause, withdraw the proposal, refrain from supporting the separatist activities of the Taiwan authorities and return to the principles set forth in the Charter and relevant General Assembly resolution. China had always respected the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other Member States and hoped that the sponsors of the proposal would respect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and would join in safeguarding the authority of the Charter and of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI). The refusal by the Committee at successive sessions of the General Assembly to include the proposal on so-called Taiwan's return to the United Nations in the agenda reflected the firm stand of an overwhelming majority of Members in support of the Charter and General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI).

65. The CHAIRMAN said that, in view of the large number of non-members wishing to participate in the discussion of the request to include the item in the agenda, it would expedite matters considerably if he did not invite the non-members individually to take places at the Committee table but rather read out the list of all such non-members. He took it that the Committee wished him to proceed in that manner.

66. It was so decided.

67. The CHAIRMAN said that the representatives of Burkina Faso, Chad, Dominica, El Salvador, the Gambia, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Liberia, Nicaragua, Senegal and Swaziland had asked to participate in the discussion of item 159 in accordance with rule 43 of the rules of procedure.

68. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Ouedraogo (Burkina Faso), Mr. Mahamat Saleh (Chad), Ms. Theodore (Dominica), Mr. Meléndez-Barahova (El Salvador), Mr. Jallow (Gambia), Mr. Millette (Grenada), Mr. Da Gama (Guinea-Bissau), Mr. Rendón Barnica (Honduras), Mr. Bull (Liberia), Mr. Paguaga Fernández (Nicaragua), Mr. Ka (Senegal) and Mr. Dlamini (Swaziland) took places at the Committee table.

69. The CHAIRMAN said that the representatives of Afghanistan, Argentina, the Bahamas, Belarus, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia had also asked to participate in the discussion of item 159. Rule 43 of the rules of procedure did not apply. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to accede to the requests.

70. It was so decided.

71. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Farhadi (Afghanistan), Mr. Petrella (Argentina), Mr. Moore (Bahamas), Mr. Gubarevich (Belarus), Mr. Patriota (Brazil), Mr. Forero (Colombia), Mr. Nuñez-Mosquera (Cuba), Mr. Agathocleous (Cyprus), Mr. Parnohadiningrat (Indonesia), Mr. Samadi (Islamic Republic of

Iran), Mr. Al-Hitti (Iraq), Ms. Arystanbekova (Kazakhstan), Mr. Mahugu (Kenya), Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Mr. Muntasser (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Rubadiri (Malawi), Mr. Koko (Myanmar), Mr. Shah (Nepal), Mr. Kamal (Pakistan), Mr. Samana (Papua New Guinea), Mr. de Silva (Sri Lanka), Mr. Osman (Sudan), Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Manongi (United Republic of Tanzania) and Mr. Kasanda (Zambia) took places at the Committee table.

72. Mr. RENDÓN BARNICA (Honduras) said that General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), which had excluded the Republic of China on Taiwan from active participation in the United Nations system, had also prevented its inhabitants from enjoying their fundamental political, economic and cultural rights within the international community. All Member States must now try to find a just solution to the problem.

73. There were precedents for the revision by the General Assembly of its own resolutions. General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) was a product of the ideological confrontation during the cold war and should be reviewed in the light of the new world political situation and the circumstances prevailing in the Taiwan Strait. Two Governments with different territorial jurisdictions coexisted on the two sides of the Strait; it was to be hoped that both sides would gradually develop mutual trust based on equality and reciprocity so as to promote a favourable climate for the eventual unification of China.

74. Over the years of its exclusion from the United Nations system, the Republic of China on Taiwan had achieved unparalleled economic development and had consolidated a democratic system of government. Those achievements reinforced the strong desire of the people of Taiwan to participate actively in the United Nations and other international organizations, and that just aspiration must not be denied.

75. Mr. PARNOHADININGRAT (Indonesia) said that Indonesia had adopted a "one China" policy recognizing the People's Republic of China and its Government as the legitimate authority governing the entire territory of China, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI). Attempts to seek the participation of the other entity representing China or other parts of China in the United Nations would therefore be contrary to Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter. His delegation therefore saw no need to review the General Assembly's earlier decision.

76. Mr. KA (Senegal) said that Senegal unequivocally reaffirmed its support for the peaceful efforts being made by the people and Government of the Republic of China to regain their place in the community of nations and their seat in the United Nations and its specialized agencies. At a time when the United Nations was adjusting to the demands of a changed world, it was paradoxical and anachronistic that the Republic of China, with its nearly 22 million inhabitants, its social and economic achievements and its democratic values, was still left out of the community of nations. The Republic of China clearly met all the conditions laid down in the Charter for its readmission as a full member of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. The restoration of Taiwan's legitimate rights would contribute significantly to the consolidation of international peace and security in South-East Asia and the development of

economic and cultural cooperation. By reviewing and updating General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), the international community would do justice to the people of the Republic of China. The history of the United Nations showed that two Governments could represent a same people divided by the vicissitudes of history.

77. His delegation therefore stressed the need for a substantive debate on the review of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) and supported the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda.

78. Mr. KITTIKHOUN (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that the question of the representation of China in the United Nations had already been settled in 1971, by General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), which had restored the inalienable rights of the People's Republic of China. The Lao People's Democratic Republic recognized the People's Republic of China as the sole authentic representative of the entire Chinese people and therefore opposed the inclusion in the agenda of the so-called question of the representation of Taiwan in the United Nations.

79. Mr. ABULHASAN (Kuwait) said his delegation held that the issue of Taiwan had already been settled by General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI). Any attempt to include the item in the agenda was a flagrant violation of that resolution, undermined the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China, and constituted interference in its internal affairs. Kuwait recognized a single China, a single Chinese people and a single Government based in Beijing.

80. Mr. AL-HITTI (Iraq) said that the General Assembly, by adopting resolution 2758 (XXVI) by an overwhelming majority, had clearly affirmed that the Government of the People's Republic of China was the sole legitimate representative of China in the United Nations. The request for the inclusion of the item in the agenda therefore violated that resolution and the Charter principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States. At a time when peaceful efforts towards national reunification were being undertaken by the Government of the People's Republic of China it was to be hoped that all Member States would cooperate with those efforts by upholding the principles of the Charter and the obligations of the General Assembly with respect to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and by refraining from any interference in the internal affairs of States on any pretext whatsoever. His delegation was, therefore, firmly opposed to the inclusion of the item in the agenda.

81. Ms. ARYSTANBEKOVA (Kazakhstan) said that Kazakhstan considered that the Government of the People's Republic of China was the sole legitimate representative of all China and that Taiwan was an integral part of the territory of China. Her delegation supported the position set forth by China and opposed the inclusion of the item in the agenda of the fifty-second session.

82. Mr. MAHUGU (Kenya) said that his delegation strongly opposed the attempt by a few Member States to include item 159 in the agenda of the current session. General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) was very clear in stipulating that only one China would be represented in the United Nations, namely the People's Republic of China. During the Chinese President's visit to Africa, including

Kenya, in May 1996, that policy had been emphatically restated. Kenya had many times categorically stated its adherence to a "one-China" policy; it felt that it was only as a united nation that the aspirations of the Chinese people could be fully respected. The success of the policy of "one country, two systems" was ample testimony of the importance of national unity even under relatively different economic systems. Kenya hoped that the people of China would amicably resolve their internal matters on their own.

83. Mr. DLAMINI (Swaziland) reiterated his delegation's wholehearted support for the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda. It was incorrect to claim that the issue of the Republic of China was not a reality when the existence of the Republic of China as a founding Member was embodied in Article 23 of the Charter, or that only a few countries were in favour of the inclusion of the item in the agenda. His delegation fully supported the call to review General Assembly resolution 2758 (1971), which had resulted from the international political situation prevailing at the time.

84. The United Nations must uphold the principle enshrined in the Charter concerning the representation of all mankind. The Republic of China met the requirements for membership of the United Nations, with its dynamic economy and democracy. It could contribute much to the strengthening of peace and stability not only in the Asia and Pacific region but throughout the world.

85. His delegation believed that the issue should be accorded the urgent treatment it deserved. The situation was exceptional; it had originated from within the United Nations and the United Nations must provide the remedy. The United Nations had a precedent in that regard, in resolution 39 (I), and, consequently, it should renew resolution 2758 (XXVI).

86. Mr. SHAH (Nepal) said that inclusion of the proposed agenda item would undermine not only the decision taken by the General Assembly 26 years earlier, but also the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The question of Chinese representation had already been decided at the twenty-sixth session. Since Taiwan was a part of China, consideration of the agenda item would amount to interference in the internal affairs of a Member State.

87. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Burkina Faso) said that when the General Assembly had adopted resolution 2758 (XXVI), the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China had each claimed to be the sole legitimate Government of the whole of China. However, the situation had changed; currently, the Republic of China sought only the reunification of the Chinese nation.

88. The proposed agenda item did not represent an attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of a Member State, but only an opportunity to take the new situation into account. The fact that many States had either ongoing or sporadic relations with the Republic of China indicated that the latter was already an international actor; all that remained was to make that status official. The States which favoured the inclusion of the proposed item asked only that the General Assembly should accept reality and work tirelessly to achieve the goal of reunification, which was the one point on which both sides agreed.

89. Mr. JALLOW (Gambia) said that he associated himself with the statement made by the representative of the Solomon Islands. The Republic of China, which had been a founding member and signatory of the Charter of the United Nations, had helped to promote international peace and security, human rights and fundamental freedoms and equitable socio-economic development by contributing to the evolution of democracy in Asia and building a strong economy and international trade relations. Despite the political changes it had witnessed, it had maintained its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

90. Since the Republic of China had lost its place at the United Nations, the international community had been deprived of the benefits of its expertise. General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had denied the 21.5 million citizens of the Republic of China their right to international representation, in contravention of the principle of universality. Nonetheless, that country had continued its economic and democratic development, to the point where it enjoyed a high ranking among the countries of the world in terms of investment, trade, per capita income and foreign reserves. Its officials, at all levels, were chosen through direct elections. The election of its President in May 1996 had been the first time a head of State had ever been directly and constitutionally elected in Chinese territory. Those achievements illustrated the country's qualifications to rejoin the United Nations. Its participation was not only desirable, but essential, since it would contribute to many aspects of global cooperation.

91. The admission of the Republic of China would not preclude the eventual reunification of the Chinese nation. The practice of parallel representation had worked very well in the cases of the German and Korean nations, and could facilitate the solution of the problem of reunification. Resolution 2758 (XXVI) had had serious effects on the status and role of the Republic of China. Its language contradicted the principle of universality and reflected the ideology of the cold war. The Republic of China met all of the criteria of the definition of statehood laid down in the 1933 Convention on Rights and Duties of States, and it abided by the Charter, treaties and conventions of the United Nations. It deserved fair treatment, and the proposed item should therefore be included on the agenda of the fifty-second session.

92. Mr. PETRELLA (Argentina) said that the General Assembly had already decided on the issue at hand in resolution 2758 (XXVI). Argentina had supported that resolution out of respect for the principle of territorial integrity. It had been one of the first States to normalize diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, and it recognized that Government as the only lawful Government of China, including Taiwan, which was part of China's territory. Argentina's ties with Taiwan were purely commercial, and therefore did not violate the spirit or the letter of resolution 2758 (XXVI). The status of Taiwan was an internal matter that should be resolved between the parties concerned. He therefore opposed the inclusion of the proposed agenda item.

93. Mr. FARHADI (Afghanistan) said that it must be recalled that, in the past, the unlawful presence of Taiwan as the representative of China had harmed the United Nations and world peace by increasing tensions. Resolution 2758 (XXVI), by revoking that status in recognition of the "one China" principle, had been an important step towards ending one aspect of the cold war. It had been said that

the adoption of resolution 2758 (XXVI) had been as important in world affairs as the fall of the Berlin Wall; that achievement must not be reversed.

94. Every year since 1993, the proposal to include an agenda item on Taiwan had been defeated in the General Committee. Any encroachment on the "one China" principle endangered the activities of the Organization. The idea of parallel representation or of "one China, one Taiwan" was merely a pretext for returning to a "two Chinas" policy and to an aspect of cold-war ideology. The changed circumstances referred to by the delegations that favoured the inclusion of the item only served to illustrate the dangers of a "two Chinas" policy. The inclusion of Taiwan in the United Nations would make discussions more difficult and would encourage separatism all over the world. Taiwan and China were one and the same nation with the same culture and traditions.

95. The 159 countries which maintained diplomatic relations with China did not support the idea of "two Chinas" or of "one China, one Taiwan". With respect to Taiwan's economic assistance to other countries, the contributions of the People's Republic of China in that regard must also be recognized. Taiwan could continue to assist the peoples of the world through non-governmental organizations; it did not need separate membership in the United Nations to do so. He therefore trusted that the Committee would once again refuse to include the proposed item.

96. Mr. BULL (Liberia) said that Liberia was one of the sponsors of the request that the General Assembly should take a fresh look at the continued exclusion of the Republic of China on Taiwan, which met all of the legal requirements of statehood. Liberia had opposed the adoption, during the cold war, of resolution 2758 (XXVI). Given the changed international circumstances, it was time to review and update that resolution to end the isolation of the Republic of China through its exclusion from the United Nations system.

97. Liberia fully respected the Government and people of the People's Republic of China and had no intention of interfering in its internal affairs. However, one of the purposes of the United Nations was to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples. Liberia supported the request to review resolution 2758 (XXVI) to bring it into conformity with the principle of universality and the Organization's established practice concerning parallel representation of divided countries.

98. Liberia maintained relations with both the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China. It deeply regretted the division of the Chinese people and welcomed the two countries' commitment to peaceful coexistence and eventual reunification. In the post-cold-war era, the international community should make every effort to ensure that the Organization was no longer constrained by ideological considerations. Accordingly, it should correct what was widely considered to be an injustice.

99. Mr. PAGUAGA FERNÁNDEZ (Nicaragua) said that the Republic of China on Taiwan met all of the requirements for statehood under public international law, including a defined territory and population under the authority of a Government that was capable of entering into relations with other States. The Republic of

China on Taiwan had demonstrated its capacity to undertake international obligations and to exercise all of the functions of States, such as the maintenance of public order and security. It abided by the rules of international law and maintained diplomatic relations with some 30 countries, including Nicaragua.

100. He rejected the insolent reference, by the delegation of the People's Republic of China, to "dollar diplomacy". The People's Republic of China did not have jurisdiction over the Republic of China on Taiwan, since it was not responsible for maintaining order there or for managing the latter's external affairs, and it did not represent the latter's interests in international organizations. Thus, the two countries were completely separate entities.

101. The full participation of the Republic of China on Taiwan would yield great benefits for the Organization by promoting international peace and prosperity and helping to solve global problems. Nicaragua had opposed the adoption of resolution 2758 (XXVI), which had failed to ensure the full representation of China. As long as the Organization refused to admit the Republic of China on Taiwan, it contravened the principle of universality.

102. Mr. MAHAMAT SALEH (Chad) said that the international community should seize the opportunity to put the principle of universality into practice. The Republic of China was still excluded from the international community, despite its democratic institutions, its strong, dynamic and diversified economy, its diplomatic and trade relations with many nations and its adherence to the principles of the Charter. To correct that situation, the Committee should include the proposed item on the agenda.

103. Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh) said that General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had settled the issue of the representation of China, and there was no need for further discussion of it.

104. Mr. MANONGI (United Republic of Tanzania) urged the Committee to reject the request for the inclusion of the item, which would raise the problem of the existence of two sovereign States on the territory of China, and could only undermine General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) and the territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China. The international community should not aggravate political problems within any territorial jurisdiction by encouraging dismemberment.

105. Mr. de SILVA (Sri Lanka) said that General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had resolved the issue of the representation of China at the United Nations, restoring the inalienable right of the Government of the People's Republic of China to be the sole legitimate representative of the Chinese people. His delegation therefore opposed the inclusion of the additional item in the agenda.

106. Mr. OSMAN (Sudan) said that over the past four years, the Committee's time had been taken up unnecessarily with discussions of the issue currently before it. The proposal contravened the principle of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, since its purpose was to split the territory of the Chinese State. The issue of Taiwan was an internal matter for the Chinese Government, and his delegation supported the recent call by the Chinese President to the

people of Taiwan to end the current state of hostility and work towards reunification.

107. Mr. MOORE (Bahamas) said that his Government had recently established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, thereby recognizing that the Government of that State was the sole legal Government representing the Chinese people as a whole. His delegation would therefore oppose the inclusion in the agenda of the item under discussion.

108. Mr. SAMANA (Papua New Guinea) said that Papua New Guinea enjoyed excellent diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China; similarly, it also enjoyed fruitful trade and economic relations with Taiwan, which were making a significant contribution to his country's economy and had the potential to expand further. His Government had on a number of occasions urged Beijing and Taipei to resolve their fundamental differences through an amicable and peaceful approach.

109. In view of the changing international climate, it was of critical importance to minimize areas of hostility which had serious ramifications for regional and international peace and security. As a friend to the Chinese people, his Government urged that both sides in the dispute should work to establish a policy mechanism that would facilitate the eventual process of unification to which both Taipei and Beijing aspired. The fundamental conceptual differences existing between the two parties could best be resolved internally. Papua New Guinea nevertheless recognized the immense technical and economic capacity of Taiwan and its potential to contribute meaningfully to international development cooperation. A peaceful approach to the resolution of the conflict would minimize hostilities and provide a positive avenue for Taiwan to play an effective role on the international scene. The issue must be treated in a fair and just manner. His Government saw some merit in the current attempt to resolve the predicament of Taipei, taking into account the changing international climate characterized by global economic interdependence.

110. Ms. THEODORE (Dominica), recalling the principle of universality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, said that the Republic of China on Taiwan fulfilled in every respect the conditions for membership in the United Nations. It exercised sovereign authority over a clearly defined geographical area, and its Government had been elected freely and fairly. Its record as a peace-loving State was exemplary, and it had shown a remarkable willingness and ability to fulfil the obligations contained in the Charter, despite efforts by some parties to restrict its international role. The international community had benefited immensely from its contributions in the areas of technical and development assistance, and it had shown complete commitment to human rights, democracy, the market economy and multilateralism. She recalled that the European Parliament had adopted a resolution supporting the request of the Republic of China on Taiwan for better representation in international organizations. Those who opposed that country's membership in the United Nations had repeatedly used one legal argument: they contended that General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had settled the issue for all time. That argument ignored the fact that the resolution had been adopted at the height of the cold war. No body was bound in perpetuity by its own legislative acts, and a resolution of the General Assembly was as much a political as a legal act. In order to take account of the

realities of the current situation and the impact of the resolution on the 21.5 million people of Taiwan, the circumstances under which the resolution had been adopted should be revisited, as should the matter of whether any procedural flaws might have been overlooked at the time. Her Government believed that the Republic of China on Taiwan could play an important and beneficial role in the international community, and that it was willing to play that role. In the name of all that was just, fair and right, the General Assembly should undertake to review resolution 2758 (XXVI), so that the citizens of the Republic of China on Taiwan should no longer be denied the opportunity to play that role.

111. Mr. ENKHSAIKHAN (Mongolia) said that there was no valid reason for including the proposed item 159 in the agenda of the fifty-second session. General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had restored the legitimate rights of the People's Republic of China and had settled the issue of the representation at the United Nations of the Chinese people. The proposal to include the item in question in the agenda contradicted not only the realities of the current situation but also the decision taken by the General Assembly in 1971.

112. Mr. MILLETTE (Grenada), recalling that, under Article 4 of the Charter, membership in the United Nations was open to all peace-loving States which accepted the obligations contained in the Charter and were able and willing to carry them out. Taiwan was a peace-loving, democratic country, both willing and able to carry out those obligations. Efforts must be made to ensure that all States which were not yet Members of the United Nations should seek to be admitted in the near future. The admission of the Republic of China on Taiwan would be beneficial to global cooperation in fields such as trade, development and multilateral efforts to fight drug-trafficking. General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) should be reviewed.

113. Mr. FORERO (Colombia) said that the sole legitimate representative of the Chinese people at the United Nations was the Government of the People's Republic of China. The attempt to include item 159 in the agenda ran counter to resolution 2758 (XXVI) and was an attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of a sovereign State. His delegation therefore opposed the request currently before the Committee. The future of China must be decided by the Chinese people themselves.

114. Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had been adopted by an overwhelming majority and had taken into account important historical and political considerations. Any attempt to call that resolution into question would weaken the force of General Assembly resolutions as a whole. Taiwan was an integral part of China, and his delegation therefore opposed the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda for the fifty-second session.

115. Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan) said that the People's Republic of China was a sovereign State Member of the United Nations, and Taiwan, as a part of China, had no right whatsoever to join the United Nations. His delegation therefore opposed the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda.

116. It was unfortunate that a few countries refused to acknowledge that the issue had been settled once and for all by resolution 2758 (XXVI), and that the

General Committee was subjected every year to the same repetitious and wasteful debate on the subject, despite the universally accepted principle of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a Member State duly recognized as such by the United Nations. His delegation hoped that the request would be rejected once and for all, so that the Assembly could devote its time to more pressing problems in future years.

117. Mr. KOBO (Myanmar) said that Taiwan was a part of China, and that it would be inappropriate to intervene in what was a domestic Chinese matter. The representation of China had been settled by resolution 2758 (XXVI), and his delegation opposed the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda for the fifty-second session.

118. Mr. SAMADI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that his delegation supported the position expressed by the representative of the People's Republic of China, and opposed the inclusion of item 159.

119. Mr. da GAMA (Guinea-Bissau) said that the request for the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda for the fifty-second session was clearly legitimate and well-founded. The 21.5 million people of Taiwan lived in a distinct territory where they had built a modern democratic society based on respect for the principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations. The United Nations should no longer ignore the legitimate aspirations of that people to play a full part in world affairs. Admitting the Republic of China on Taiwan to the United Nations would contribute to international stability and full cooperation among members of the international community. His delegation therefore supported the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda and a review of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) in order to take account of changes that had taken place in the international situation.

120. Mr. MEKDAD (Syrian Arab Republic) recalled that the General Assembly, at its twenty-sixth session, had adopted resolution 2758 (XXVI) by an overwhelming majority. The request to include item 159 in the agenda of the fifty-second session was not in line with the provisions of the Charter or with that resolution. Any attempt to create two Chinas was in reality a distortion of the facts and an attempt to rekindle cold war issues. His delegation supported the position of the People's Republic of China.

121. Mr. GORELIK (Russian Federation) said that his delegation's position in support of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China remained unchanged. The issue had been adequately settled by General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), and that resolution did not require revision. His delegation therefore opposed the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda.

122. Mr. NÚÑEZ-MOSQUERA (Cuba), recalling that General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI) had made it clear that the People's Republic of China was the sole legitimate representative of the Chinese people, and recalling that his Government had always advocated respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and non-interference in their internal affairs, opposed the inclusion of item 159.

123. Mr. POLITI (Italy) said that it was the responsibility of the Chinese Government to pursue a dialogue aimed at the peaceful solution of problems relating to its internal affairs. The proposal to include item 159 in the agenda should therefore be rejected.

124. Mr. ELARABY (Egypt) said that the issue of the representation of China had been decided finally and decisively by resolution 2758 (XXVI), and it should not be considered again. His delegation respected the territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China and did not accept any interference in the internal affairs of that State. It therefore opposed the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda.

125. Mr. AGATHOCLEOUS (Cyprus) said that the issue of the representation of China had been settled clearly and definitively by General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), and that his Government had always supported the principle that there must be universal respect for the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of States. He supported the position of the representative of the People's Republic of China.

126. Mr. KASANDA (Zambia) said that the issue had been resolved once and for all by resolution 2758 (XXVI). His Government supported the "one China" policy; Taiwan was a province of the People's Republic of China, so it could not seek membership of the United Nations. The issue was an internal Chinese matter and must be left to the Chinese people. His delegation therefore opposed the inclusion of the proposed item in the agenda.

127. Mr. RUBADIRI (Malawi) said that there had been fundamental changes in the international situation over the past 50 years; peoples around the world yearned for changes in how they were governed. As the new millennium approached, the people of the world were looking forward to an international community made up of States which governed themselves democratically and in which sustainable development and fundamental human rights would be respected.

128. The matter before the Committee was one of healing of wounds between two brothers. Member States should accept that there had been fundamental changes in the international situation. The two opposing brothers should be encouraged to get together and resolve their problems through dialogue. His delegation supported those who called for continuous discussion of the Taiwan issue at the United Nations.

129. Mr. MELÉNDEZ-BARAHONA (El Salvador) said that his Government respected the right of all delegations to express their views and to present initiatives for discussion of any given issue by the General Assembly. Regarding matters such as that currently before the Committee, there were still various perceptions that were left over from the cold war. Those who had proposed the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda did not believe that they were going against the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. What was needed was a solution to an international problem; in recent years, many territories had exercised the right of self-determination.

130. The representation of the People's Republic of China was not at issue. The problem was the international isolation of the people of Taiwan. At the time of

the adoption of resolution 2758 (XXVI), his delegation had reserved the right to speak further on the item in light of future changes in the international political situation. The issue of the participation of the Republic of China on Taiwan corresponded to an international political reality which, in the light of the humanitarian issues involved and the need for universality, should not be ignored. The international situation, at the time of the adoption of resolution 2758 (XXVI) had been very different. His delegation therefore supported the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda.

131. Mr. PATRIOTA (Brazil) said that his Government recognized the People's Republic of China as the sole representative of the Chinese people. There was no need to review General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), and his delegation opposed inclusion of the item in the agenda.

132. Mr. GUBAREVITCH (Belarus) reaffirmed his delegation's full support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China, of which Taiwan was a part. It therefore opposed the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda.

133. Mr. TELLO (Mexico) said that Mexico supported the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China. Inclusion of item 159 would be contrary to the interests of the Organization. His delegation reaffirmed its support for General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI).

134. Mr. CAMPBELL (Ireland) said that his Government was committed to a "one China" policy, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI), and was unable to accept the arguments that had been made for the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda.

135. The Committee decided not to recommend the inclusion of item 159 in the agenda of the fifty-second session.

The meeting rose at 7.15 p.m.